

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources
Statewide Prescribed Burn Committee Charter
Revised March 24, 2006

Mission:

Function as a self directed work team to provide the leadership and support necessary to foster a safe effective prescribed burning program for the purpose of managing fuels or restoring and maintaining sustainable ecosystems.

Outputs:

The Statewide Prescribed Burn Committee (hereafter "Committee") will provide services to the;

- Forest Resource Issues Team (FRIT)
- Regional Prescribed Burn Committees
- Division Burn Committees
- Minnesota Interagency Fire Center
- MNICS Agencies (including the MNICS Prescribed Burn Working Team)

The Committee will work to;

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|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| -Respond to Senior Managers | -Foster communication | -Clarify/prioritize issues. |
| -Share ideas. | -Suggest improvements. | -Spearhead change |
| -Provide program direction. | -Formulate policy. | |

Levels of Authority:

Committee sponsor; *The sponsor for the Statewide Prescribed Burn Committee will be the Forest Resource Issues Team (FRIT).*

Decisions; *The Committee will draw on their knowledge and experience regarding Department processes to decide which decisions they can make and which need to be approved or made by FRIT. Generally, they will take initiative in areas where intentions and consensus are clear and refer remaining items for approval.*

Progress reports; *Meeting notes will be sent to the members of the FRIT and a list of persons that desire to be kept informed. This list will be maintained by Division representatives on the Statewide Rx Burn Committee. This same pool of individuals will be kept informed of progress and may be used as sounding board for Committee proposals.*

Measures of Success:

The Committee will know they are successful when:

- Fire dependant ecosystems are being restored and maintained.
- Burns are being conducted safely.
- Errors are being minimized and the learning value of them maximized.
- Internal desires to expand burn accomplishments are being accommodated without an increase

in accidents or errors.

-A reasonable level of reporting and record keeping is being done.

-The technical knowledge base supporting the burn program is expanding.

The Committee will be meeting the needs of their customers when;

-Department level concerns about prescribed burning are being dealt with adequately.

-Divisions are able to accomplish their targets.

-Burners feel they have the direction needed to accomplish their objectives.

-Burners feel that barriers to burning have been reduced or removed.

Make-up:

Committee membership;

-The Committee shall be comprised of 9 persons including a minimum 4 Division Representatives (i.e. Parks, Wildlife, Eco Services and Forestry), 3 Regional Burn Committee Members and 2 At Large members. It is recognized that other Divisions or organizations within the Department (e.g. Trails and Waterways, etc.) may desire representation on the Committee in the future should their prescribed burning programs expand.

Group size; The Committee will be kept small enough to be effective, consequently it may not provide broad geographical or discipline representation. To accommodate individual concerns, the Committee will maintain an open process and welcome parties with concerns to sit in on meetings and be featured on the agenda.

Professional knowledge and skills available and needed for the team to succeed;

-Members of the Committee should possess professional knowledge and skills including field resource management, prescribed burning techniques, wildfire suppression, ecosystem requirements, organizational dynamics, interpersonal communication and how to make meetings work. These skills should allow the Committee to achieve their mission, however, some outside facilitation services may be helpful at times.

Department knowledge represented and needed for the team to succeed;

-Members of the Committee should possess knowledge of agency cultures, processes, policy, budgets, reporting, personnel practices and training and experience requirements. This knowledge should be sufficient to handle most issues.

Subject matter expert needs;

-Subject matter experts may be needed to aid discussions in a number of areas including;

**Dispatch systems.*

**Personnel training and qualification.*

**Technical burn related information.*

**Equipment standards and capabilities.*

**Bargaining units considerations.*

Duration:

Membership term; *Members will serve for four years, renewable for a second term with the*

consent of the member, their supervisor and the Committee. Division Representatives may be reappointed by their respective Directors.

Membership rotation; Two or three members will be eligible for replacement each year. A replacement sequence of 2-2-2-3 will be observed to provide the potential for a complete turnover of membership every four years.

Replacing members; Replacements for Division Representatives will be appointed by Division Directors. Volunteers and/or nominees for other vacant positions, will be considered by the Committee and selections made on the basis of how a candidate might provide balanced representation and/or expertise. The selected candidates will be recommended to FRIT for approval by January 1st of each year.

Resigning from the Committee; Members finding it necessary to resign should notify the Director of their Division, their supervisor and the Committee chair. The Committee will work with the departing member to select a replacement or alternate based on the time remaining in their term. The departing member should endeavor to introduce and orient their replacement.

Work Expectations:

Committee members will handle or delegate their normal workload by;

-Negotiating with their supervisors to adjust work priorities in a way that will accommodate committee demands. Work demands are not likely to exceed 6 meeting and 6 preparation days during the year for most members.

Leadership:

Selection of Committee leadership and tenure;

-The chair will be selected by the Committee members every two years.

-The chair will serve for two years with the potential to extend for another term if mutually agreed upon by the individual and the Committee.

-New leaders are selected from the Committee membership and are expected to have gained the necessary skills while performing their normal job duties.

Resources:

Resources available to the team and needs;

Clerical services will be allocated to ensure adequate communication (i.e. meeting minutes, announcements, etc.). Expenses for travel, postage and facilitation services may be incurred and will be handled by Division budgets.

Logistics:

Scheduling meetings;

-Meetings will be called by the chair who will make a concerted effort to accommodate the

schedule of as many Committee members as possible. The frequency of these meetings will be determined by the issues needing attention but will take place 3-4 times per year on average.
-Meeting times and locations will be adjusted to accommodate the membership and availability of the subject matter experts needed to make progress on the issues at hand.
-An annual meeting with FRIT would be desirable. A winter meeting would offer the opportunity to report progress, set priorities and discuss plans for the upcoming burning season.

Meeting arrangements;

-Meeting arrangements will be made by the chair or staff designated to work with the Committee.

Documentation of Efforts:

Preparation of documents and recording;

-Documentation of Committee activities and discussions will be necessary. Clerical assistance to perform necessary tasks will be provided by the Chairpersons' Division.

-Various documents (e.g., policy instruments, procedures, memos, etc. will be drafted by members of the Committee.

Distribution of documents;

-Documentation of Committee activities will be distributed to members, FRIT and a mailing list of persons that would benefit from receiving the information. This mailing list will be maintained by Committee members, taking into account the structure and culture of the groups they represent.

-Documents that are prepared by Committee members will be distributed based on the character and needs of the issue they respond to.

-Clerical assistance to prepare, copy and distribute these documents will be needed. In some cases, postage expenses will be incurred.

Recognition:

-When appropriate, individuals will be recognized for their contribution to the Committee at the time their term expires. This will be the responsibility of the Committee and budget authorization to purchase appropriate mementoes will need to be obtained by a Committee member.

-Recognition of the entire Committee will be the responsibility of its sponsor (i.e., FRIT).

Approved by Committee: Date _____ Signature _____

Approved by FRIT: Date _____ Signature _____

Ground Rules:

1) The Committee will make decisions based on consensus and will strive to reach consensus within the group (meaning all members support or decline to oppose a decision). Failing this, they may

choose to refer the question to their sponsoring body.

2) The Committee will take legal mandates into account when making decisions and developing policy.

3) Members that are unable to attend a meeting may send an alternate but they should take the responsibility to orient that individual so they can be a productive participant.

4) It will be the responsibility of individual members to bring themselves up to date after an absence by contacting their alternate, the chair or some other member. The Committee will take initiative to keep absent members involved by designating a person to contact the absent member from those in attendance at the end of the meeting.

5) If a Committee member fails to attend 2 consecutive meetings, the chair will contact them and determine if they intend to continue or if they want to seek a replacement.

6) Meetings will begin with introductions, members highlighting successes experienced since the last meeting and a review of the agenda for additions or changes.

7) Members will support team progress by completing assignments and coming to meetings prepared.

8) The committee will find productive roles for all members.

9) Meetings will go beyond the scheduled adjournment only with the consensus of the team.

10) A preliminary agenda and date for the next meeting will be developed at the end of each meeting.

Notes on **primary changes** from the previous Charter dated January 4, 2002;

-Updates language to make it consistent with a standing committee rather than one just beginning to function.

-Clarifies language regarding the makeup of the committee and how it should be handled when a member represents more than one group.

-Clarifies the role of Division Directors in selecting and appointing Division Representatives to the committee. Brought the process in line with current practice.

Appendix A

Meeting Notice:

Date: Location: Start Time: Stop Time:

Who is Attending?

Meeting Objective:

Preparation prior to meeting:

Meeting Action Plan:

Recorder:

Action to Be Taken	Responsibility	Status Report Due or Expected Completion
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See reverse side for this team's current ground rules and mission statement